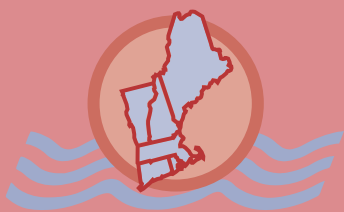


Quinnipiac River Watershed



Watersheds

A watershed is the land that water flows across or under on its way to a stream, river or lake and is nature's way of dividing up the landscape. New England includes many eco-systems that, by virtue of their ecological value, recreational value, or proximity to large populations, hold a special significance to us. EPA New England is focusing particular attention and resources on these special places. Working closely with our federal, state and local partners, these community based initiatives are delivering tangible environmental improvements to these watershed areas.

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Photo: Heather Harkins, Quinnipiac River Gorge

Why Does the Quinnipiac River Watershed Need Special Attention?

- . The Quinnipiac has great recreation potential, for the 591,000 people in its 14 cities and towns, including native brook trout fishing, birding, canoeing, and two state parks.
- . Industrialization and dense population has left the river contaminated by toxic chemicals, and nutrients and bacteria. The watershed has Superfund sites and troublesome landfills. Illegal dumping has fouled its waters with garbage and hazardous wastes.
- . Water may be over-allocated, and late-summer flows may not be sufficient to preserve habitat.
- . Flooding is a problem and the proliferation of paved surfaces causes stormwater runoff problems, including sedimentation and erosion.
- . Public access to the river is poor, recreation opportunities are limited, and fish passage is restricted by dams.
- . CT DEP, EPA, the QRWA and Yale's CCWS worked with local stakeholders to form the Quinnipiac River Watershed Partnership (QRWP) to address these problems, and to improve, restore and maintain the Quinnipiac River.

What are the Long Term Goals?

- . To clean up the river, its tributaries, and all significant sources of contamination.
- . To increase opportunities for recreation.
- . To involve the public in ensuring the long term health and well-being of the watershed.

Progress/Goals for the Future

What Partnership Progress has Been Made?

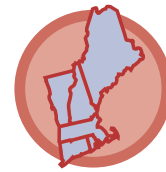
- . The Partnership hired a coordinator to help direct its activities and intensify its efforts locally.
- . QRWA and EPA worked with the CT Air National Guard to airlift an old storage tank from the marsh.
- . Partnership work groups produced studies of water quality and low flow in the watershed.
- . The Partnership's Habitat workgroup stream inspections identified degraded habitat and streamside restoration sites in 6 tributaries and the main river, which resulted in restoration of an illegally filled area along the Muddy River. The workgroup acted to biologically control the epidemic spread of the exotic plant, purple loosestrife.
- . The Partnership's Tidal Marsh and Land Use Workgroups, along with Yale's CCWS and the Regional Growth Partnership hosted a workshop at which community members explored opportunities for access, conservation and development around the tidal marsh. An offer was made at the workshop for public access to the river across private land.
- . Funding from EPA and CT DEP for use in the Quinnipiac watershed supported UCONN outreach programs on water pollution prevention for each watershed town, a study of streamflow by USGS, and a watershed assessment and a study of bacterial contamination by Yale's CCWS.

What Major Actions are Planned for 2001?

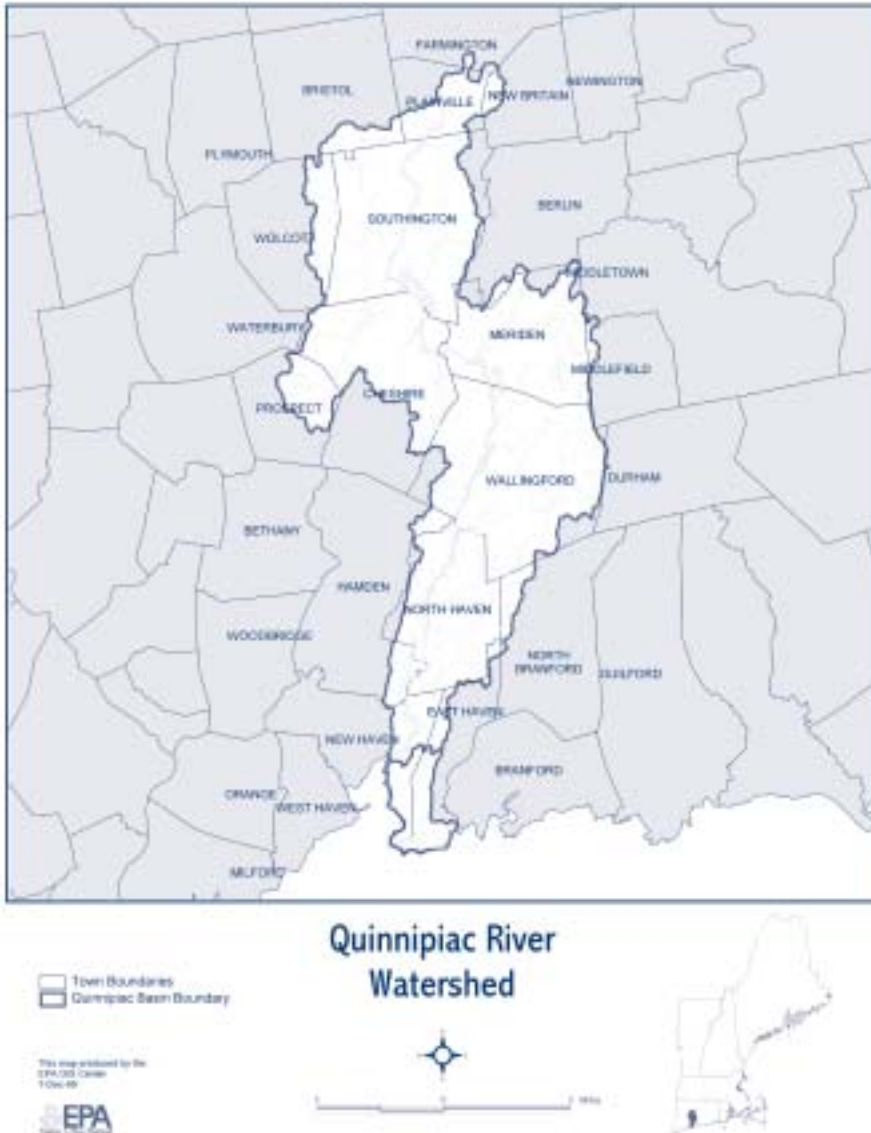
- . Complete a watershed action plan with input from all community members.

(continued)

Quinnipiac River Watershed



Watersheds



What Major Actions are Planned for 2001? (continued)

- . New funding from CT DEP & EPA will begin restoration of habitat and streambank areas along Wharton Brook and in its state park, restore a drainage swale in Harbor Ridge, identify more opportunities for restorative activities through streamwalks, continue the trash cleanup efforts of the QRWA, and enact recommendations from their report on trash and illegal dumping in the river.
- . Develop a linear trail and greenway along the mainstem of the river, connecting to Wallingford's new linear trail.
- . Support public and business community actions to restore the Quinnipiac tidal marsh and develop public access to it.
- . Continue to investigate sources of bacteria, contaminants, and sedimentation in the river.
- . Begin working with municipalities to assist them on compliance with upcoming stormwater regulations.
- . Open an exhibit on the Quinnipiac tidal marsh in Yale's Peabody Museum.

Who are the Quinnipiac River Watershed Partnership members?

The municipal governments and citizens of Plainville, Southington, Cheshire, Meriden, Wallingford, North Haven, Hamden, New Haven, New Britain, Bristol, Wolcott, Prospect, North Branford, and East Haven • Watershed businesses and industries • EPA New England • CT Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) • Quinnipiac River Watershed Association (QRWA) • Yale University Center for Coastal and Watershed Systems (CCWS) • USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) • New Haven County Soil & Water Conservation District • The Soundkeeper Fund • Central Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments • Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency • South Central Regional Water Authority • Quinnipiac Linear Trail Advisory Committee • Watershed Land Trusts • CT Department of Transportation • US Army Corps of Engineers • US Geological Survey (USGS) • Regional Growth Partnership • Trout Unlimited • East Side Civic Association



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